



## Informational Notes for First Responders and Officials

Bulletin #81 – September 14, 2005

SEMA's Homepage: [sema.dps.mo.gov](http://sema.dps.mo.gov)

### **Missouri Receives Presidential Disaster Declaration For Hurricane Katrina Response**

Missouri Governor Matt Blunt announced the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved his request for Emergency Disaster Assistance to support Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

“This federal emergency disaster declaration will help local jurisdictions recoup eligible costs associated with emergency protective measures that were undertaken to save lives and protect public health and safety,” Blunt said. Blunt noted State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) staff will be working with local jurisdictions to identify and determine eligible reimbursable costs associated with this relief effort.

### **Blunt Stars in PSAs for Missouri Donations Hotline – (800) 841-8891**

Missouri Governor Matt Blunt will star in a Public Service Announcement (PSAs) promoting the Missouri Donations Hotline – **800 841-8891**. Southwestern Bell Communications donated this 800 number. The number becomes operational at 10 a.m. on September 15. The PSAs will run on radio and television stations for six weeks beginning Sept 17. The Missouri Donations Hotline has been established for anyone wishing to volunteer or donate to the Hurricane Katrina victims. Trained AmeriCorps volunteers will help callers between the hours of 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., seven days a week.

The Missouri call center can receive calls regarding donations, and volunteer opportunities for Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and Missouri. The call center will also receive calls regarding hurricane victim housing opportunities. Monetary donations are still preferred because it allows hurricane survivors to purchase items they need in their local communities. Many of the Gulf Coast communities are not prepared to accept, store or distribute unsolicited items.

### **Over 8,000 Katrina Victims In Missouri**

On Tuesday, Sept 13, the Red Cross is working with 8085 Hurricane Katrina victims staying with family, friends or faith-based organizations in Missouri.

“We encourage every Katrina victim to register with the local chapter of the American Red Cross,” said SEMA Director Ron Reynolds. Registering does several things – victims will receive vouchers for emergency food, medicine, clothing and housing. The Red Cross will also help victims get into the FEMA disaster registration system either via the 800 number or the FEMA website.

Additionally this helps Missouri voluntary and faith based disaster response organizations help administer services in the local communities. SEMA will use the information to help reimburse governments for the emergency related costs associated with their Hurricane Katrina activities.

**Businesses & Individuals Should Contact FEMA's Website is [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)**

## **Missouri Sheltering Operations & Services Established by Local EMAs**

The Emergency Management Offices in St. Louis, St. Louis County and Kansas City should receive accolades for their intensive efforts over the Labor Day weekend to establish and standup shelters to accommodate large numbers of Hurricane Katrina victims FEMA indicated they would be flying to either St. Louis or Kansas City.

A special thanks to all the Red Cross Service Centers in Missouri especially the Springfield, Cape Girardeau, Columbia, Jefferson City, which have accommodated large numbers of Hurricane Katrina victims who self evacuated to family and friends in Missouri. A special thanks to the Salvation Army, and ALL the faith-based organizations with disaster response missions, and the many communities who operated shelters and helped Katrina victims in their communities. A special thanks to the Missouri Departments of Health and Senior Services, Natural Resources, Social Services and Mental Health for their assistance with sheltering operations. A special thanks also goes to all the members of the Governor's Disaster Recovery Partnership.

St. Louis City set up a shelter in a city-owned building adjacent to Lambert International Airport, which could accommodate up to 2000 evacuees. This facility featured sleeping areas, showers, and a designated play area for children. St. Louis County rehabilitated a county facility to serve as a shelter for victims already living in the county, established a donations call center, and an electronic tracking system. Kansas City set up two shelters – at Brush Creek Community Center and at Roberson Elementary School, to accommodate up to 500 evacuees.

## **Red Cross Extends Hotel Accommodations Assistance For Evacuees**

The American Red Cross, in cooperation with FEMA, is extending its temporary housing assistance program for an additional 14 days and may continue to grant extensions every 14 days on a case-by-case basis.

“We’re two weeks out from Hurricane Katrina and many people are facing a housing crisis. They may have gone to stay with family, but they can’t stay there indefinitely. They may be in a town where a small shelter is closing. Rather than have those people uprooted again and have them go to a shelter when their current situation runs out, we want them to know the Red Cross and FEMA will cover the cost of an additional 14 days in a hotel and will continue that support until other housing is available,” said Michael Brackney, manager of client service program development for the American Red Cross.

Evacuees who need this assistance must contact front desk staff at their hotel to arrange to extend their stay for an additional 14 days, if space is available. They will be asked for evidence of their pre-disaster address, which must be in a ZIP code Presidentially declared as a disaster area, and, for the number of people needing accommodations.

## **Trained Volunteer Opportunities in Louisiana and Mississippi**

Authorities in Louisiana and Mississippi ask that volunteers work with an established disaster response organization such as the American Red Cross, Salvation Army or a faith-based group. Trained volunteers will be given an assignment in a specific area. Self-deployed volunteers in both states are draining much needed resources that could be used to assist victims.

## **State Agencies Respond to Hurricane Katrina Through EMAC**

The following Missouri State Agencies have responded to Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) requests for assistance in Mississippi and Louisiana: over 2000 Missouri National Guardsmen, 50 Missouri State Highway Patrol officers, six Missouri State Highway Patrol communications officers,

eight Missouri State Water Patrol Officers with four boats, 16 Department of Conservation Officers with eight boats, and SEMA's Statewide Volunteer Coordinator, Dante Gliniecki.

### **Accolades to Karen Benson & Partnership For Response**

Karen Benson, co-chair of the Governor's Disaster Response Partnership, backfilled the Missouri Volunteer Agency Coordination efforts for Hurricane Katrina response while Dante Gliniecki has been deployed to Mississippi. Benson has been instrumental in collection of Katrina victim information. She is working disaster relief coordination between voluntary organizations and faith-based disaster response organizations. She worked with Polk County/Bolivar EMD Kermit Hargis provide training for the Missouri Donations Call Center.

### **Katrina Crisis Counseling Available for Returning Responders**

Jenny Wiley, Assistant Coordinator of Disaster Readiness  
Department of Mental Health

National Guardsmen, CERT teams, firefighters, and other volunteers returning to Missouri after a deployment to New Orleans, Mississippi and Alabama will have been exposed to horrific scenes. These returning responders should be aware of two crisis-counseling opportunities. There is a Missouri Katrina Crisis line available at 1-866-840-3940 as well as a National hotline that ties into the Missouri line. The National Katrina crisis line number is: 1-800-273-TALK.

### **Hurricane Katrina Response**

SEMA's website: [www.sema.dps.mo.gov](http://www.sema.dps.mo.gov) lists contact information for citizens wishing to volunteer for the Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts in Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama.

### **U.S. Labor Department Announces Job Bank to Assist Workers and Employers Affected by Hurricane Katrina**

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Department of Labor today announced the creation of the Katrina Recovery Job Connection dedicated to connecting workers impacted by the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina with employers who want to hire them. It will also support the hiring associated with critical clean-up efforts in impacted areas.

The expanded Web site is designed to assist three specific audiences: individuals seeking new, full-time employment either in their home state or in a new state; individuals wishing to assist in the clean-up and rebuilding efforts through temporary employment, and employers who want to list jobs supporting hurricane recovery efforts or want to hire workers impacted by the hurricane.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration is reaching out to multi-state employers from across the country to add job opportunities to this new site. The Katrina Recovery Job Connection can be found at <http://www.jobsearch.org/katrinajobs> or through America's Job Bank at [www.ajb.org](http://www.ajb.org).

### **Insurance Contact Information for Katrina Victims in Missouri**

Home and business owners displaced by Hurricane Katrina should contact their insurance agent or company immediately to file a claim. If owners have questions regarding their insurance policies or how to file claims, they may contact their state's department of insurance by phone or by using the Web. The Missouri Department of Insurance gives the following contact information:

- Louisiana Department of Insurance, 1-800-259-5300 or [www.ldi.la.gov](http://www.ldi.la.gov)
- Mississippi Department of Insurance, 1-800-856-1982 or [www.doi.state.ms.us](http://www.doi.state.ms.us)